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Ibrahim to join new media organisation

Eirmalasare Bani

PADIBERAS Nasional Bhd (Bernas) group managing director Mohd Ibrahim Mohd Nor will resign from the post to take up an executive position with a newly-formed media organisation proposing to undertake the privatization of national news agency Bernama.

But he is expected to remain on the Bernas board as deputy chairman and play a non-executive role, sources said.

Talk of his departure from Bernas was also lent credence by the company's announcement yesterday of the appointment of Encik Yahya Abu Bakar as deputy group managing director effective October 1. The post had remained vacant for some time.

"There is obviously a strong team already in place at Bernas," the sources said.

Ibrahim, together with former New Straits Times Press (NSTP) group editor in chief Datuk A. Kadir Jasin and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's former special assistant Datuk Jalaluddin Bahaudin, have reportedly submitted a proposal to the Economic Planning Unit to take over Bernama.

"We have submitted a proposal to the EPU and are waiting for them to respond," AFP quoted Jalaluddin as saying yesterday.

The proposal is said to include offers for Radio Televisyen Malaysia 2 (TV2), six radio stations - Radio 1, Radio Music, Radio Kuala Lumpur, Radio 4, Radio 5 and Radio 6 - and the National Film Development Corp.

The entire exercise is expected to be completed in six months.

Ibrahim is a minority share holder in Budaya Generasi (M) Sdn Bhd, the holding company of Bernas which as at May owned 30.4 per cent of the privatized rice and padi board.

Ibrahim, when contacted, declined to comment.

Budaya Generasi is a consortium comprising Permatang Jaya Sdn Bhd (35 per cent), Simpletech Sdn Bhd (10 per cent), ZAW Venture Sdn Bhd (10 per cent), Syarikat Perniagaan Perlindungan Sdn Bhd (10 per cent) and the National Farmers Association (10 per cent).

The other shareholders are National Fishermen Association (10 per cent), Management and Employees of Bernas (10 per cent) and Syarikat Perniagaan Peladang Sdn Bhd (5 per cent).

Other Bernas in turn is Besides Budaya Generasi, the other shareholders in Bernas are Serba Etika Sdn Bhd (21.03 per cent) and Mr Goh Soh Leong (5.02 per cent). The Government hold a golden share.

On the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange yesterday, Bernas shares slipped 3 sen to close at RM1.78.

Sources meanwhile said Kadir's involvement in the package deal is "not related to his appointment as chairman of Bernama's board of governors effective September 1".

The agency has been in operation for 32 years and has a staff of about 400.

Kadir took over Berita Publishing, the magazine publishing arm of the NSTP group, in July after stepping down as the group editor in chief.

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